New Brunswick. N. J. September 27th 1841.

Dearly Beloved Brethren

You doubtless have been surprised at the long delay which has attended the answering of your last communication, dated in August 1840. The time of its arrival being in the midst of our vacation, there was no one to go to the office and get it out; and the Post Master having laid it aside, it continued in obscurity until a short time since, when on its re-appearance, we obtained it. We are pleased with the kind and brotherly feelings which it exhibits toward us, and can assure you that they are reciprocated on our part. Such feelings should indeed ever be exhibited by those who have one common Father - God; - who love the same kind, mighty Savior; - who profess a deep interest in the same common, glorious cause - the conversion of a world. — — Your conclusions on the question of self consecration to the cause of Foreign Missions, meet with a ready response in our hearts, and we hope that by many of us, this question is prayerfully considered. May God make us faithful with ourselves! We feel that there is much danger of having our eyes blinded by interest or passion or prejudice. That there is danger, even after we have thought ourselves to have looked at the question impartially, - of finding that we have been mistaken and that the curse of Meroz is resting on us, because we have not acted up to the solemn obligations which devolved on us. It would be far better for us to labor amongst the most degraded of the human race and amid the greatest privations than to be found at a post of honor and of ease, with such a curse resting on us. Doubtless it is a truth of which we all feel convinced, that the cause of Missions, from its connections and its intrinsic merits, deserves and should possess the highest regards, and warmest efforts of all Christians

But when we look over the Church as a mass, how heavily does the truth press upon the mind, that the poor heathen must take up the lamentation, "no man careth for my soul." Something has been done, but when compared with what ought to have been done, with what might have been done, it sinks into insignificance. How few of the body of professing Christians experience that deep, abiding interest in this cause which they should! How much of the little gold and silver that is contributed, is given with a heartless and a grudging hand! How many of the few prayers that are offered in behalf of this cause, are, even in the judgment of charity, offered up with a want of that deep and earnest conviction of their necessity, which is one of the grounds of faith! And why is all this? It is because there is a want of that adequate knowledge, which must be the foundation of true and lasting feeling. It is (and with humility would we advance the sentiment) because the subject is not pressed home upon the hearts and consciences of ~~individuals~~ the members of individual churches, by their pastors, with sufficient frequency and earnestness. The old adage "like priest, like people", is too deeply founded in the nature of things ever to become untrue. Especially in many country congregations, where the Pastor is necessarily the moving power in all religious and benevolent matters, - we can not expect the people to become aroused, while he remains inactive. ——— With canvassing the failings of others, we should have little to do. Yet it is highly proper for us to seek to avoid that in which they have failed, and to do our whole duty. And here it is, that we look for the best effects to result from the existence of these Societies of Inquiry in our Seminaries. We hope that

through their means, such an interest will be awakened in behalf of this cause, in the breasts of all our fellow ministers, that they will be led to devise means whereby, with the blessing of God, they may be enabled to stir up the whole of the Church, and cause all Christians to move forward in one solid phalanx, to drive the arch fiend Satan and all his hellish crew, from the confines of our world. We have reason to thank God that the number of those Pastors who feel such an interest, though it be small, is increasing. May He add to that number, every individual who goes forth from your institution, and from ours. It certainly is not Utopianism to say, that every Minister of the Gospel, wherever he be situated, should feel it to be his duty, to do all that he can, to give the gospel to the destitute — should feel that he is laboring under the broad and unqualified command "preach the gospel to every creature", and under no other. If called in the Providence of God to labor in the midst of Christians at home he should consider it to be his duty, to be continually striving to do all that can be done for the welfare of the heathen, by the fervent prayer and liberal supply of means from his own people. Let us seek to carry such a spirit with us when we leave the "school of the prophets" and then may we hope too, that the promise will be verified to us and to our people, "he that watereth, shall be watered also himself". But we need not wait until we became accredited Ministers, to exert our influence in this matter. We may do much, by striving to excite an interest in this cause, in the breasts of those Christians whom we are continually meeting. Whatever we should do, let us do it quickly, and with all our might. And if it be our duty to move in this cause, may we be enabled to begin immediately, for procrastination is the thief that steals away our good resolves and makes them worthless. We will be glad to hear from you speedily. May the grace of God abide with you all.

Farewell

In behalf of the Soc: of Inq: — Theo: Sem: New Brunswick N. Jersey — — — A. D. Williamson
Cor. Sec.

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Ansd Nov 15th 1842.